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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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Office of Current Intelligence

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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SUMMARY

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FAR EAST

1. Breakdown of Soviet and Caucasian troops in North Korea estimated:

The US Far East Command estimates, on the basis of 96 pertinent reports received in the period from 1 January to 1 September 1951 that a total of 25,900 Soviet or Caucasian personnel are in Korea.

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Soviet personnel in Korea, numbering 15,400, are listed as follows:

Three antiaircraft divisions, unidentified -- 6,000
One security or infantry regiment, in northeastern Korea -- 1,500
Military advisers -- 2,000
Engineers - 1,500
Supply, counterespionage, local security -- 1,500
Coastal defense, artillery and antiaircraft artillery (separate from antiaircraft personnel listed above) -- 1,500
Signal and radar -- 1,000
Civilian advisers -- 400

Caucasian elements, numbering 10,500, are believed to be assigned as follows:

One artillery division, unidentified - 5,000
Other capacities (ground and air) -- 5,000
Hospital and medical -- 500

The Caucasians are believed to be advance elements of a "Soviet Puppet Force;" according to the Far East Command, additional reports indicate the presence in or imminent movement to Korea of troops that would fall into the classification of Caucasian members of a "Soviet puppet army." Information concerning the existence of an organic, tactical "Soviet Puppet Force" continues to be inconclusive.

Comment: While this estimate of the number of Soviet troops in Korea cannot be verified, their number undoubtedly has risen sharply during 1951. No Soviet or Caucasian combat unit has been positively identified in Korea.

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EASTERN EUROPE

3. Czechoslovak President perturbed by Western moves:

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During an interview with President Gottwald and Foreign Minister Siroky on 13 September, the Belgian Minister in Prague gained the impression that the Czech Government was "considerably disturbed by recent developments" in Czechoslovak-Western relations as a result of the Oatis case. The purpose of the interview, the first Gottwald has given to a non-Communist representative in many months, was to notify the Prague government of the accession of the new Belgian king. Upon completion of the formalities, however, Gottwald turned the subject to Western relations and stated that Western Europe, under US leadership, was trying to blockade Czechoslovakia. The Belgian Minister replied that, in his opinion, the US would never abandon its attempts to free Oatis.

Comment: The interview with the Belgian Minister may impress the Czech regime with the widespread support in the West of the US position on the Oatis case. Czech propaganda has recently shown sensitivity to the adverse reaction to the Oatis case in the West.

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WESTERN EUROPE

4. US Minister to Austria opposes concession on air corridor agreement:

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US Minister Donnelly has advised the British Deputy High Commissioner of US concern over current Anglo-Soviet conversations regarding a proposed modification of the air corridor route

between Vienna and the British Zone of Occupation. Donnelly asserted that he could see no justification for amending the corridor agreement, and that he would not in any case concur with the suggestion that the Soviet authorities be given prior notice of the flights of military aircraft. The British deputy agreed with these views and promised to keep the US Legation informed on the bilateral negotiations.

Comment: The Soviet authorities have been pressing vigorously their proposal to shift the British air corridor north and west of its present route, ostensibly for reasons of safety. The British have submitted counterproposals involving controlled and variable-altitude flights. Allied authorities are convinced that Soviet Headquarters is concerned because present flights permit photographic reconnaissance of the Soviet military airfield at Wiener Neustadt.

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